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FRANKLIN COUNTY CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUMMER CAMPS FOR AREA YOUTH

Created in 2005, the Commissioners are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Franklin County Youth Summer Camp Program, which provides safe and nurturing summertime activities for youth. For many parents, the camps also make it possible for them to remain working, knowing their kids are safe, busy learning, have access to a nutritious meal and are having fun. Today, Commissioners approved \$2.8 million for this year's summer camps which will be offered at 26 camp locations throughout Franklin County.

The program serves children ages 5-13, and camps are 8 to 10-weeks long for a minimum of 30 hours a week. This year, nearly 2,300 youth will be given the opportunity to attend a Franklin County summer camp.

With the approval of today's funding, the Commissioners' 10-year investment in the Franklin County Summer Youth Camp program reaches \$17 million and has provided fun, safe summer learning to 16,600 youth in Franklin County since 2006. Youth like Mosheh Clark, who attended this morning's meeting and spoke about his experience as a 10-year old at Central Community House where he developed an awareness of greater opportunities available to him beyond his situation at that time. Now 22, Mosheh is a senior at The Ohio State University studying accounting. Mosheh works for the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity as a youth leader for Franklin County's *More Than My Brother's Keeper* program, an initiative funded by the Commissioners for young African American males ages 10-14 living on the Southside of Franklin County.

"These camps are a great way for parents to prevent summer learning loss and keep their kids safe," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "I always loved summer camp as a young girl. In camp, I learned how to swim, dance, practiced archery and I also met the guy that became my husband when we grew up! I am so pleased that for the past 10-years we've made sharing camp opportunities with local children a priority. I look forward to getting out this summer and visiting our camp-goers in action."

The Franklin County Summer Youth Camp programs include a wide array of camps to choose from including art education, math and reading, science exploration, physical activities ranging from bowling, and skating to hiking, rope climbing and gardening, and a summer reading program, cooking and nutrition classes and drama clinics.

"Summer camps keep our young people active and engaged and also help families remain focused on their own work or job training," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "It's a smart investment for Franklin County because it will enrich our future generations and ensure our workforce remains competitive."

"School may be nearly out but these campers will continue to learn and grow, and achieve academically while having fun and making some new friends," said Commissioner John O'Grady. "As the father of four,

I also appreciate the value summer camp has for parents, providing a safe and nurturing place for kids to spend the day learning and being active.”

A complete list of summer camps and enrollment information is available on line at <http://franklincountyohio.gov/ftp/slideshow/FCDJFS/44C43435-9E55-A128-3C0239F27DBA25B5.pdf>.

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